

PROCEEDINGS
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A NEW *LEPTODEIRA* FROM MEXICO

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The recent work by Dunn (Proc. Nat. Acad. Sci., vol. 22, 1926, pp. 689-698) and Taylor (Kans. Univ. Sci. Bull., vol. 25, 1938 [1939], pp. 315-355, figs. 1-7, pls. 30-34) on *Leptodeira* has greatly clarified the taxonomy of the Mexican species of the genus. The 70 specimens recently secured in Mexico during tenure of the Walter Rathbone Bacon Traveling Scholarship (Smithsonian Institution) have, with but a single exception, supported the more recent arrangement by Taylor. This exception concerns *annulata polysticta*, an association which both Dunn and Taylor believed divisible; in fact Taylor points out the chief peculiarity of the central and northern Veracruz specimens here named. The segregation of the population in this region greatly clarifies the relationship between *polysticta* and *septentrionalis*.

Leptodeira annulata taylori, subsp. nov.

Holotype.—U. S. National Museum No. 30208, Orizaba, Veracruz, collected by Sumichrast. *Paratypes*. Twelve. U.S.N.M. Nos. 7088, 30207, topotypes; No. 30508, "Veracruz"; No. 12113 (5), Mirador, Veracruz; No. 65154, Hills west of Veracruz; No. 111224, Cerro Gordo, near Puente Nacional, Veracruz; and EHT-HMS 4618, Acultzingo, Veracruz.

Diagnosis.—Like *annulata polysticta*, with 196 to 206 ventrals, 80 to 101 caudals, usually three preoculars, and spots not extending below the third scale row; differing from that form by having fewer spots, 36 to 47 (49 to 66 in 38 *polysticta*).

Description of holotype.—Supralabials 8-8, 4th and 5th entering orbit; 10-10 infralabials, five in contact with anterior chinshields; three preoculars, lower very small and wedged between 3rd and 4th supralabials; two postoculars, lower less than half size of upper; temporals 1-2-3.

Dorsals in 21-23-17 rows; ventrals 201; anal divided; tail incomplete; total length 497 mm.; tail 72 mm. (incomplete).

Dorsal surface of head light brown, uniformly stippled with darker, otherwise without dark marks; nape of same color; a longitudinal, dark

brown nape stripe extending from posterior tip of parietals to first dorsal blotch; latter four scales long medially, with short, anterolateral extensions reaching toward mouth; 44 dark spots on body; these blotches one and one half to two scales long, separated from each other by light spaces two or three scales long, extending laterally to the fifth or sixth scale row; a series of small spots on the second and third, or sometimes involving also the fourth, rows of scales; these spots alternating with the larger middorsal spots; slight evidence of other, smaller, very vague spots between these, opposite the ends of the middorsal blotches; ground color light brown, with fine, darker brown stippling; belly light, with very little stippling posteriorly; subcaudal surface more strongly stippled; mental, anterior labials and anterior chinshields with some dark stippling.

Variation.—The twelve paratypes are very much like the type. All have some evidence of a dark longitudinal nape stripe; the dorsal spots are narrow and do not extend laterally beyond the third scale row. In most there is some evidence of a postocular stripe, and the head may be darker than the nape. Usually there is more pigment on the belly.

SCALE COUNTS IN *taylori*.

Museum	Number	Sex	Scale Rows	Ventr.	Caud.	Supral.	Infral.	Proc.	Ptoc.	Body Spots
EHT-HMS	4618	♀	23-23-17	198	84	8-8	10-11	3-3	2-2	45
USNM	7088	♀	20-23-15	202	.....	7-8	.....	2-3	2-2	41
USNM	12113	♀	21-23-17	199	80	8-8	10-10	3-3	2-2	36
USNM	12113	♀	21-23-?	200	85	8-8	10-10	3-3	2-2	37
USNM	30207	♀	21-23-17	196	84	8-8	10-10	3-3	2-2	47
USNM	12113	♂	21-23-?	204	.....	8-8	10-10	3-3	2-2	46
USNM	12113	♂	21-23-15	206	100	8-8	11-11	3-3	2-2	38
USNM	12113	♂	.....	206	94	.....	.....	3-3	.....	44
USNM	30208	♂	21-23-17	201	.....	8-8	10-10	3-3	2-2	44
USNM	30508	♂	.....	.....	88	8-8	10-10	2-2	.....	36 +
USNM	65154	♂	21-23-16	203	94	8-8	10-10	2-3	2-2	43
USNM	111224	♂	21-23-15	198	101	8-8	10-10	3-3	2-2	44

The lower preocular is fused with the third labial on both sides in No. 30508, on one side (the side with seven labials) in No. 7088. In No. 65154 it is fused with the fourth labial.

Remarks.—The series of five specimens (U.S.N.M. Nos. 25206-7, 25209-11) from Tuxpan, Veracruz, referred by Dunn (*op. cit.*, p. 693) to *polysticta*, I believe are more properly identified as *septentrionalis* (Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 330). Four of the series have the dorsal spots reaching to the first or second scale rows, at least on the posterior part of the body, as is typical of *septentrionalis*. However, one (No. 25211) has the spots reaching only to the third or fourth scale row (posteriorly), as in *taylori*; in this specimen and one other the ventral counts are higher (201) than in other *septentrionalis* (maximum, 197; *taylori*, 196 to 206); and two have caudal counts higher (80, 82) than in other *septentrionalis* (maximum 79; *taylori*, 80 to 101). In view of the great similarity of *taylori* and *septentrionalis* in body form, pattern of the head (almost complete absence, only a feeble postocular stripe), presence of a nape stripe (reduced but present in *septentrionalis*), three preoculars, 21 or 23 scale rows, pigment on the posterior ends of the

ventrals, and a stippled ground color, I believe there can be little doubt that the Tuxpan series shows definite evidence of intergradation between the two forms. Accordingly the northern form should stand as *Leptodeira annulata septentrionalis* (Kennicott). I agree with Taylor that the latter form can not intergrade with, or be particularly closely related to, *maculata*, a specimen of which is present in the Tuxpan, Veracruz, collection (U.S.N.M. No. 25208).

The cotypes of *polysticta* were from Jalapa, Veracruz; Yucatán; Belize, British Honduras; Honduras; and Panamá. Since these specimens include three forms as defined at present (Panamá = *annulata*, Jalapa = *taylori*) it is well to fix the name *polysticta*. I hereby designate the Belize specimen as lectotype. It is a female with 21 scale rows, 211 ventrals and 84 caudals (*vide* Boulenger, Cat. Snakes Brit. Mus., vol. 3, 1896, p. 96).